



Urban League of  
Metropolitan Seattle

*Empowering Communities.  
Changing Lives.*

August 28, 2009

The Honorable Raymond H. LaHood  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Re: Mercer Corridor Project TIGER grant application

Dear Secretary LaHood:

Through public advocacy, providing services and developing strong business and community partnerships, the Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle will strive to empower, enable, and assist African Americans, other people of color and disadvantaged individuals in becoming self-sufficient. It is within this context that we are writing on behalf of the hard working small, minority and women-owned and economically disadvantaged business enterprises comprising the member contractors of the Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle's Contractor Development and Competitiveness Center (ULMS-CDCC), to urge you to fund the Seattle Mercer Corridor Project.

The Mercer Corridor Project supports the growth of Seattle's Center City, the economic engine of the Pacific Northwest. The project itself creates approximately 600 direct construction jobs that will start up with the award of the grant – livable wage jobs that our over 75 member firms can bid on. To date, the ULMS-CDCC has helped members obtain in excess of \$7 million worth of construction contracts with the City of Seattle.

If the Mercer Corridor Project isn't completed, thousands of jobs may be at risk. Employers will be unlikely to expand their operations without the infrastructure improvements needed to support growth.

Please assist the Urban League in fulfilling our mission critical by supporting the City of Seattle's TIGER grant petition.

Respectfully submitted by,

*Tony Benjamin*

Tony Benjamin, Executive Director  
Contractor Development & Competitiveness Center

**cc:**

Senator Patty Murray  
Representative Jim McDermott  
Mayor Greg Nickels

Senator Maria Cantwell  
Governor Christine Gregoire  
Council President Richard Conlin